# TENETS OF COUNTER-INSURGENCY WARFARE

BY

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It is likely the United States will be engaged in counter-insurgency operations for the foreseeable future and such operations promise to consume a substantial amount of our nation's resources. This project sets out to identify underlying tenets (or principles) in counter-insurgency warfare in order to optimize conditions for success on the battlefield as well as throughout the duration of the conflict. This study posits there are 17 principles of counter-insurgency warfare which fall into four broad categories: strategic, operational, logistical, and cultural. Battlefield commanders must successfully master these principles in order to bring about success as efficaciously as possible.

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# TENETS OF COUNTER-INSURGENCY WARFARE

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# ABSTRACT

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It is likely the United States will be engaged in counter-insurgency operations for the foreseeable future and such operations promise to consume a substantial amount of our nation's resources. This project sets out to identify underlying tenets (or principles) in counter-insurgency warfare in order to optimize conditions for success on the battlefield as well as throughout the duration of the conflict. This study posits there are 17 principles of counter-insurgency warfare which fall into four broad categories: strategic, operational, logistical, and cultural. Battlefield commanders must successfully master these principles in order to bring about success as efficaciously as possible.

# TENETS OF COUNTER-INSURGENCY WARFARE

Shortly after 11 September 2001, the United States was confronted with the stark reality of being involved in a transnational war against terrorism. Although some scholars, political pundits, members of the media and officials have come to question the exactitude of the phrase "war on terrorism", the prospect of U.S. forces becoming engaged in counter-insurgency or guerrilla style warfare in the future to cope with the menace of terrorism remains likely. To be sure, I am not asserting guerrilla warfare is the only option available to terrorists, jihadists, or other extremists; the war in Vietnam is a notable example of how an extremist group, the Viet Minh, was able to adeptly combine guerrilla and conventional forces into a program of hybrid warfare; warfare in which irregular and conventional organizations fight in mutually supporting operations.[1] Nevertheless, if one concedes the United States (U.S.) will be engaged in counter-insurgency or counter-guerrilla operations as a matter of course for the foreseeable future, despite the distressing nature of such a prospect, it will be worthwhile to engage in a discussion about attempting to determine if there are any principles or tenets of counter-insurgency operations in order to optimize conditions for success by U.S. forces on that type of battlefield. Accordingly, this essay proposes a series of tenets pertaining to counter-insurgency warfare with corresponding analyses supporting each tenet. The tenets have been placed into four broad

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[1] In 1965, U.S. involvement in South Vietnam was precipitated in large measure the actions of North Vietnamese Army (NVA) regular forces destroying Army of the Republic Vietnam (ARVN) counter-insurgency force. Prior to 1965, operations in Vietnam were virtually pure insurgency and U.S. operations were almost completely counter-insurgency. However, from 1965 through 1969, the Vietnam War remained a hybrid war with the government of North Vietnam determining the relative priority between conventional and irregular warfare. From 1970 through 1975, it was primarily a conventional war waged by the NVA against the ARVN, with or without US troops. (I am grateful to Professor John A. Bonin for the aforementioned insight. It was provided to me via an email message, 23 January, 2009.)

categories (strategic, operational, logistical, and cultural) because the research ostensibly permits using such taxonomy.

I. Strategic Considerations

1. <u>Endorse a representative form of government</u>. Arguably, the most important strategic component for waging an effective counter-insurgency campaign is for government officials and those who support the government to *endorse a parliamentary form* of government which can serve to meet citizens' demands through constitutional mechanisms. In his insightful work on the United States' history with guerrilla warfare, Anthony J. Joes writes about the challenges insurgents face when confronted with the alternative of a democratic form of government.

> "But it is certainly true that to overthrow by internal rebellion a government based on popular consent, or even with the trappings of such consent, is very difficult. That is because many who might long for the profound changes in the life of the society cannot be mobilized for armed struggle and fratricidal destruction if there exists, or seems to exist, a nonviolent path to the desired changes. Parliamentary government provides such a path…"[2]

In short, a constitutional, democratic form of government which is characterized by genuinely competitive elections serves to legitimize governmental authority while simultaneously hindering the process of legitimation for the insurgents. To this end, security forces must publicly endorse open and genuinely competitive elections in order

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[2] Anthony J. Joes, *America and Guerrilla Warfare* (The University Press of Kentucky, 2000), p. 185.

to ensure they are seen by the public as an enabling instrument of representative government as well as supporters of peaceful methods of change.[3]

2.  <u>Obviate external sources of support</u>.  The second strategic tenet of counter-insurgency warfare is to *stymie external support* for the insurgents.  Insurgencies having had the benefit of receiving steady assistance from foreign sources usually found such support extremely profitable, if not, vital.  Americans, during the War of Independence, found external support from France in the form of troops, naval vessels and financing essential to the successful outcome of the revolution.  The same can be said for Vietnam and their communist benefactors, China and the Soviet Union.  Greek communist rebels during the aftermath of World War II profited considerably from Yugoslav support until Tito ultimately denied further assistance in 1949.[4]  Finally, the Union blockade of the Confederacy during the American Civil War provided a steady and inexorable strangulation of the South; much needed and hoped-for supplies from Great Britain never made it to Southern ports.

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[3] John R. Galvin in *Guerrilla Warfare and Counterinsurgency: U.S.-Soviet Policy in the Third World*, eds. Richard H. Shultz, Jr.; Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr.; Uri Ra'anan; William Olson; and Igor Lukes (Lexington, MA: DC Heath and Company, 1989), p. 119.

[4] The importance of terminating foreign assistance is made manifestly clear in the case of the communist insurgency in Greece from 1945-1949.  During the early years of the post-World War II insurgency, Greek communist forces were able to hide weapons caches, acquire food provisions, and obtain refuge after bloody encounters with the Greek Army within the relative safety of Yugoslavia.  However, by July 1949, Tito no longer considered it within Yugoslavia's interest to support the rebels and closed the country's borders to them; effectively denying the insurgents much needed sanctuary.  As pressure mounted, their inability to find safe haven in Yugoslavia expedited the end of the rebels' campaign.  Obviously, not all cases of eliminating foreign sources of support will be as dramatic as the Greek case; however, the point remains: denying foreign sources of support usually has a crippling, if not fatal, effect on an insurgency.

3. <u>Marginalization, not the destruction, of the insurgency.</u>[5] Victory must not be defined in terms of: to what extent the insurgents are destroyed; rather, victory must be considered in terms of: to what extent society considers itself different from the values, conduct, and objectives of the insurgents. A counter-insurgency campaign must bring to light any atrocity or any injustice committed by the rebels against the citizenry as well as any goal or belief considered to be anathema to the values of the nation. The ideology and atrocities of the Revolutionary Armed Force of Colombia in Colombia, the disdain and manifest contempt Greek communist rebels had for the average Greek farmer, the conduct of the Red Brigade in Italy (the kidnapping and murder of former Italian prime minister Aldo Moro and the December 1981 kidnapping of BG James Dozier) are examples of how insurgency behavior can be undermined while the counter-insurgency campaign can be bolstered. Any injustice or unsavory practice such as robbery; kidnapping; vandalism; bombings; mistreatment of people; assassination of local

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[5] Joes makes a poignant comment is this regard. In writing about U.S. policy in Vietnam; he states: "But the Johnson-McNamara policy in Vietnam stands out as a model of what not to do. Sending a huge American army to Vietnam for active campaigning *ignored the essence of counter-guerrilla warfare*: it sought to kill rather than isolate the guerrillas." Joes, *America and Guerrilla Warfare*, p.252, (my italics). Also, see Napoleon Valeriano and Charles T.R. Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations: the Philippine Experience* (New York, Praeger, 1962). Valeriano and Bohanna consider the greatest imperative for guerrillas is "to gain active support or at least passive toleration from a majority of the people in the area of operations." p. 19. Additionally, for an excellent discussion about the nature, goals, and approaches which ought to be considered in a counterinsurgency campaign, a review of the U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide is essential. Although the guide goes beyond the scope of this work, the following excerpt is highly insightful: "…the intent of a COIN campaign is to build popular support for a government while marginalizing the insurgents: it is therefore fundamentally an *armed political competition* with the insurgents. Consequently, control (over the environment, the population, the level of security, the pace of events, and the enemy) is the fundamental goal of COIN, a goal that distinguishes it from peace operations or humanitarian intervention. Within these broad characteristics, the specific nature of any particular COIN campaign arises from the complex interaction of three key factors: the **characteristics of the environment** (physical, economic, political and human) in which it takes place; the **nature of the insurgent** group (or groups); and the **nature of the counterinsurgent** government and its security forces." *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide*, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, January 2009, pp. 19-20. Emphasis in the original.

officials; terrorization of families, neighborhoods, or villages; and drug trafficking, for examples, perpetrated by insurgents against the populace are tools the government can and should use to promote the marginalization of an insurgency.

4. <u>Identify the center of gravity</u>.  A center of gravity (COG) can change during a conflict and, therefore, it is vitally important to continually assess friendly and enemy COGs to determine if a change has occurred.  During the War of Independence, the American center of gravity for the rebellion was George Washington and the Continental Army rather than the population or the "guerrilla"[6] units of the Carolinas.  The ability of the Continental Army to consistently regenerate itself in the aftermath of defeat, harsh seasons, or termination of enlistments meant the British had to destroy the Continental Army if they were to have any real hope of victory in America.[7]  If the Continental Army had been destroyed, the British would have had to reassess and determine the new enemy COG, which quite possibly could have been the colonial population or the guerrilla bands in the South which, through their existence, were providing hope and a manifest avenue of resistance for the American rebels.  In Operation Enduring Freedom we initially identified the Taliban as the COG and destroyed them, but a reassessment was not conducted and we failed to identify the Afghan people as the new COG.  Much effort and resources were focused on direct action against Al Qaeda and Taliban remnants rather than on directing resources in support of the Afghan population, such as the

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[6] The term was not used during the period of the American Revolution, but it aptly conveys the style of warfare at that time in that region.  The term "guerrilla" (little war) came into usage during the Peninsular War (1808-1813) with Spanish resistance to French rule after Napoleon's annexation in 1808 and installation of Joseph, his brother, as the new regent.

[7] Joes, *America and Guerrilla Warfare*, pp. 31, 47.

professionalization of their military and police forces. In counter-insurgency operations, a common COG is the population and, accordingly, a premium must be paid in matters of professionalizing those institutions which have a direct impact on the population such as police and utility services. In matters of correct COG identification, it is necessary to apply the requisite level of analysis as well maintain an awareness that COGs change during conflicts, so continuous monitoring, evaluation and reassessments must be conducted.

5. <u>Avoid protraction of the conflict</u>. Insurgencies seek to undermine governmental legitimacy. They do this by attempting to consistently demonstrate the government's inability to provide security throughout the country, and, if possible, to deny basic services from the government while providing similar services if it is within their capacity. The longer a government is unable to provide the requisite level of security and basic services, the greater risk it runs of losing popular support and the erosion of its legitimacy. Although defeating insurgents in skirmishes or battles can bolster governmental legitimacy, military victories in insurgencies are often ephemeral.[8] Holding territory, providing security, and providing basic services on a continual basis serve to threaten an insurgency more than direct military engagements. The longer an insurgency can effectively challenge a government's ability to provide security and services, the greater the likelihood the effected population will consider the government to be ineffective and, eventually, illegitimate.

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[8] Ibid, p. 328. Also, Valeriano and Bohannan point out that guerrillas seek to overcome the enemy's will to resist by psychological rather than by military means; *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, p. 20.

6. <u>Leverage factionalism</u>.  While the existence of factions might deny a government the ability to focus on one center of gravity, savvy policy makers can leverage factionalism in order to exacerbate intra-insurgency or inter-insurgency rivalry.  The identification of different ideologies or objectives among insurgent groups should be promoted in order to develop and exacerbate tension amongst the groups.  During the Philippine War (1899-1902) American forces were confronted with an insurgency led by Emilio Aguinaldo. Aguinaldo was an ethnic Tagalog and so were most of the insurgents.  U.S. forces in the Philippines were able to recruit scouts from non-Tagalog groups who were familiar with the countryside and the sentiments of the local population because of non-Tagalog concerns about the insurgency being dominated by ethnic Tagalog's.[9]  The efficacy of exploiting differences among insurgent groups is also evinced in El Salvador during the 1980s.  The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) was never a homogenous organization, rather it was an alliance of guerrilla groups organized in Havana which were highly suspicious of and even hostile to each other.[10]  As the El Salvadoran Army became more professional and as the population increasingly came to view the government as legitimate, the challenges facing the FMLN increased.  With greater pressure against the guerrillas and a non-supportive population to contend with, fissures within the FMLN began to appear.  As the government continued its counter-insurgent program of military professionalization and respect for the population, dismemberment of the FMLN accelerated.

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[9] Joes, *America and Guerrilla Warfare*, p. 109.

[10] Ibid., p. 268.

Having discussed the strategic tenets of counter-insurgency warfare, let us now turn to the operational tenets. I am categorizing as "operational" those military issues which can have an impact on policy makers but are *not usually* matters of policy. For example, the morale of a state's armed forces can have an impact on a nation's ability to meet national security threats; however, the issue of morale is normally relegated to the purview of the leadership of the armed forces, not policy makers.

II. Operational Considerations

1. <u>Condition of the national army and moral rectitude</u>.  In every case where there has been a successful counter-insurgency campaign, the condition of the army was a vital factor. For examples, the communist insurgency made significant headway in Greece as long as the Greek National Army remained largely ineffective.  However, with the appointment of General Alexander Papagos as commander and chief of the Greek armed forces in January 1949, the morale and professionalism of the Greek Army improved, and with those improvements came increased pressure against the insurgents.  The same can be said of the improvement of the Filipino Army when General Ramon Magsaysay was appointed secretary of defense in September 1950 and given the responsibility of defeating the Huks during the Huk rebellion from 1945-1954.[11]  As the Greek, Filipino, and El Salvadoran cases indicate, the respective insurgent movements were halted and eventually defeated when there came into existence an effective and professional

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[11] In May, 1954, the Huk rebel leader Luis Taruc, surrendered to Filipino authorities.  Although a few hard core communist Huk rebels continued to fight, the surrender of Luis Taruc is the event which has come to mark the end of the rebellion.

indigenous army. Constant training, willingness, and commitment by leaders and soldiers will start to develop reputations of professionalism and lead to success and, ultimately, enhance the legitimacy of the government in the minds of the public. Alternatively, the success of Fidel Castro's forces against the Cuban Army of Fulgencio Batista and the success of Mao's Red Army against Chang Kai Shek's Nationalist forces are poignant examples as to the catastrophe which awaits a government when its armed forces are unprofessional. It is worth mentioning here an important component of military professionalism is displaying moral rectitude among the population, specifically, the avoidance of vindictiveness by any armed force associated with the government. Continence and justice are important values in every society although each society determines what it considers to be just. Government forces must operate within the limits of what the society deems to be just and must do so continually.

2. <u>Ensure the requisite military and police forces</u>. A counter-insurgency campaign is man-power intensive because of the importance which must be placed on holding territory. This means the size of a government's forces must be large enough to cover a wide area while maintaining a portion large enough to actually conduct offensive operations against the insurgents themselves. Essentially, a government must deny sanctuary for the guerrillas within its borders while having an offensive arm to physically pursue and attack the guerrillas. In keeping with this tenet, indigenous forces should be used to the maximum extent available and in accordance with the requisite level of professionalism. Indigenous forces possess knowledge of terrain, culture, language and access to

intelligence beyond that of U.S. forces.[12]  Additionally, it must be pointed out expanding the capacity of the host-nation's police force is also extremely important.  Police are often the largest element of a host-nation's security forces, and the U.S. military must be prepared to advise, assist and properly train a host-nation's police force in light of the facts they operate very closely with the population and can serve as a vital bulwark in counter-insurgency operations upon obtaining the confidence and support of the local communities; a confidence which is engendered via a police forces' adherence to the rule and professional behavior.

3.  <u>Obtain better intelligence</u>.  In light of the unique challenges posed by a counter-insurgency campaign, particularly the ability of the insurgents' ability to easily blend within the civil population, the collection and prompt exploitation of intelligence is vital. Good treatment of the civil population can serve as an intelligence boon for the government.[13]  In the same vein, good treatment of prisoners, especially insurgent prisoners, can be of tremendous benefit.  It is worthwhile to remember some insurgents are impressed or join under false pretenses such as purported acts of brutality or atrocities committed by the military.  In other cases insurgents are made to serve under conditions of duress such as threats made against the lives of family members.  Good treatment of prisoners can serve to debunk many of the distortions and propaganda promulgated by

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[12] Robert M. Cassidy, *Counterinsurgency and the Global war on Terror: Military Culture and Irregular Warfare*, (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), p. 127.

[13] Galvin addresses the duress of the civil population during an insurgency:  "During the early stages of the struggle, violence is less an instrument of destruction than a psychological tool to influence the attitudes of specific sectors of the population.  The conflict becomes a form of political coercion; the reluctant, basically neutral civilian populace wants only to be left alone but is forced to take actions in support of the insurgents." Galvin, *Guerrilla Warfare and Counterinsurgency*, p. 118.

insurgent leaders as well as induces some captives to turn against the insurgency by willingly providing intelligence to the government. Also, another method of obtaining intelligence is by infiltrating the insurgents' ranks. As government forces become more effective, an insurgency will become more desperate to find recruits and this will provide greater opportunity for government agents to penetrate the insurgent organization.

4. <u>Aggressiveness</u>. Although great care must be given to conducting combat operations among the population, pursuit of insurgents must be relentless. Sustained and extended patrolling, becoming highly familiar with the terrain (urban or rural), constantly seeking decisive contact, and sharing in the misery with indigenous forces denies the enemy rest and sanctuary while cultivates a close bond between the military forces of the host nation and the U.S. Aggressiveness also extends into the realm of intelligence. Constantly pursuing intelligence leads and honing intelligence capabilities are critical components to an aggressive counter-insurgency campaign. Aggressiveness should also include focusing on attacking the insurgents' logistical bases. Insurgencies do not have the resources of a state in matters of arms and food production in order to sustain their efforts. They must rely on external sources or on what they can seize or on what they can receive from the local population in order to sustain themselves. Without outside support or porous borders, an insurgency's ability to sustain itself is tenuous without domestic support. Therefore, aside from garnering support by the population, government forces must seek to conduct food and weapon denial campaigns in the form of searching for weapons caches and disarming the population of most of its weapons (excepting what is considered necessary for the defense of one's home and family). Offering a weapons-for-money program as well as a weapons amnesty program (no questions asked, no threat of

punishment when a weapon is turned-in) can significantly decrease the amount of weapons available to insurgents. Although food denial might be more difficult, American involvement in the Philippine counter-insurgency campaign in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is insightful. According to Joes:

> "Scouring a given territory for hidden fields and storehouses…uncovered many food caches" and caused many insurgents to resort to growing or stealing food rather than fighting the Americans. The American food denial campaign seriously hurt both the guerrillas' morale and their health; guerrilla life in any country and any conflict is often filled with hardships; for the Philippine insurgents, the lack of medical facilities and the decreasing food supplies meant increasing illness."[14]

5. <u>Avoid static defenses</u>. The American War of Independence, the American Civil War, and the post-World War II communist insurgency in Greece provide noteworthy examples of the dangers of adopting static defenses in a counter-insurgency campaign. A static defense campaign aims at identifying key terrain within an area of operation and then defending those areas with the requisite personnel; however, the problem with adopting a static defense approach is twofold. First, in a counter-insurgency campaign key terrain not only includes water treatment facilities, utility plants, bridges, hospitals, heavily trafficked roads, and government centers, but the population-centric nature of counter-insurgency operations also means safeguarding hamlets, villages, the homes of local leaders, and schools as well. The demand of defending so much terrain requires a huge investment in resources, particularly in matters of both personnel and finances. The second problem is it concedes a portion of the initiative to the insurgents. Static defenses provide insurgents with the opportunity to attack with a numerical advantage at a place

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[14] Joes, *America and Guerrilla Warfare*, p. 110.

and time of their choosing.  Successfully attacking targets of opportunity helps to foster a reputation of competence for the insurgents while simultaneously undermining that of the government's.

6.    <u>Decentralized execution and adapt tactics to local conditions</u>.   Although a counter-insurgency strategy is important in order to insure the disparate military, political, economic, and informational components of such a campaign are well integrated and synchronized, the conduct of the military component of the campaign requires decentralized execution.  Small unit leaders must be empowered not only to conduct tactical operations but to work directly with the local population and its leaders in order to enhance the legitimacy and prestige of the government and its affiliates.

III. Logistical Considerations

The requirement governing logistics considerations in the counter-insurgency campaign can be distilled into the following formula: counter-insurgency operations must enable friendly sustainment, deny sustainment to hostile elements, and enhance security effectiveness.[15]

1.    <u>Dependence on local sources of supply increases vulnerability</u>.   Counter-insurgency campaigns can become protracted and require a significant amount of government forces to be in the field throughout the duration of the campaign.  Although

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[15] *The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, with forwards by General David Patraeus and Lt. General James F. Amos and by LTC John A. Nagl, and with a new forward by Sarah Sewell.  (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007), p. 270.  According to this manual, carrying out effective sustainment operations can not only shape the conduct of a campaign, it can have a decisive impact on it.  p. 255.

"living off the land" can promote mobility and speed by reducing some logistical requirements, it exposes government forces to the same perils and challenges faced by the insurgents.[16] This can be an acutely critical problem for U.S. forces during the initial stages of an anti-insurgent campaign when the local population might be unwilling or unable to provide logistical support because of threats made by the insurgents or because of a lack of confidence by the population. Accordingly, a counter-insurgency campaign must ensure food, ammunition, and medical supplies are routinely provided to government forces; otherwise the risks of malnutrition, sickness, low morale, and defection increase. There is, however, a corollary to this tenet; it is: reliance on external sources of supply increases capability, but also increases dependence. The Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) became so dependent on U.S. materiel resources that after U.S. forces left in 1973, the ARVN could not hold their own against the North Vietnamese Army when Congress terminated their aid. This is a risk we might be running in Iraq and Afghanistan. In both conflicts, the emerging local security forces are becoming dependent on U.S. capabilities.[17]

2.      Provide and protect basic services. Effective marginalization of insurgents is not merely a consequence of direct action against the insurgents, but it must also aim at stymieing the flow of potential recruits into their ranks. When a host-government's ability to provide basic services (such as easy access to potable water; basic food stuffs;

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[16] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, p.19

[17] The author is grateful to Professor John a Bonin for this insight. His comments about the vulnerability a host-nation faces by becoming dependent on external capabilities was brought to my attention via an email message he sent on 23 January 2009.

medical care; electrical power; and sanitary conditions in the neighborhoods) is tenuous or absent, U.S. sustainment operations must, at least initially, be prepared to provide and protect such services.  Providing or restoring basic services on behalf of the host-nation government not only serves to satisfy some of the basic needs of the population, but it provides manifest example that the government is working on behalf of the needs of its people.  On the other hand, insurgents will work to neutralize the aforementioned efforts by attacking basic services in the hope of demonstrating governmental weakness while attempting to foment disgruntlement among the citizenry against the government and the security forces associated with it.  Accordingly, an effective counter-insurgency campaign must be prepared to provide basic services to the citizenry, but must do so on a virtually continuous and non-degraded manner.[18]

3.      Seek efficiencies.  An important challenge facing U.S. forces engaged in a counter-insurgency effort is to deny the opponent the claim the insurgency is a nationalist struggle and which foreign forces (the United States and it allies) are attempting to thwart in matters of the realization nationalist goals and identity.  Accordingly, reducing the *appearance* of U.S. force presence will be considerably advantageous notwithstanding a substantial military deployment.  Within this context, seeking efficiencies assumes the tasks of providing requisite logistical support while minimizing presence and demands on

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[18] U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual alludes to this point.  Chapter 8, paragraph 8-37 states: "Planners must strive to have the smallest possible gap of time between when they assess essential services and when U.S. forces begin remediation efforts.  To keep this time gap as small as possible and manage the development of popular expectations, logistics units may need to initiate remedial services until HN authorities and agencies can assume these functions." *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, p. 271.

the host-nation's infrastructure.[19]  Use of aerial assets, nighttime logistical convoy and

earthen barriers, for example, are actions which promote efficiencies by reducing the

burden on a host-nation's infrastructure as well as the appearance of permanence while

satisfying the logistical requirements for U.S. forces.[20]

IV. Cultural Considerations

1.    <u>Graft and corruption</u>.  The evidence of graft and corruption can be very frustrating

and can cause a manifest disrespect and depreciation for the society in which one is

operating in light of the direct contradiction that behavior is to the rule of law,

orderliness, and accountability.  However, many people within developing societies do

not have a sustainable, adequate income and graft and corruption, as repugnant as it is,

helps to offset the financial challenges many people in those societies face.

Consequently, a counter-insurgency campaign must aim at reducing some of the social

ills which lead to corruption while implementing procedures for greater accountability,

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[19] A part of this tenet is borne out in paragraph 8-5 of the Counterinsurgency Manual.  The Counterinsurgency Manual states:  "The COIN environment requires logisticians to seek distribution efficiencies wherever possible. Logisticians must strive to eliminate backtracking and unnecessary distribution traffic.  Ideally, logisticians maximize throughput methods that bypass…population centers and heavily used transportation assets." *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, p. 259.

[20] Interestingly, the U.S Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual makes a poignant comment relating to this issue; the manual states:  "Under certain geographic conditions, such as in rugged mountains with few passes or desolate desert terrain, placing secure operating bases astride or near the insurgents' LOCs can improve counterinsurgents' interdiction and disruption capabilities."  However, the manual goes on state:  "Bases must be set up so that they do not project an image of undue permanency or a posture suggesting a long-term foreign occupation."  Accordingly, a well placed logistical base can enhance operational efficiencies as well as obviate an image of occupation.  Nevertheless, it is vitally important to point out that notwithstanding the importance of reducing an image of permanence and foreign occupation, "the primary concern" must be that bases are "secure and defendable".  *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, p. 261.

particularly among governmental entities.[21]   Additionally, security forces must be sensitive as to how punishment is meted out to individuals suspected of corruption. Respect for local norms of honor and dignity should be complied with to the greatest extent host-nation laws and US Army values permit.

2.      <u>Special deference accorded to religion, local leaders (elderly, tribal, clan) or women</u>.  A counter-insurgency campaign seeks to establish or restore the authority of the central government in the areas or region(s) threatened by insurgents.  Accordingly, a counter-insurgency campaign does not necessarily seek to upset the traditional values and norms of the existing society.  Consequently, U.S. forces must support the establishment of national authority and respect for laws to the extent they are consistent with human rights and dignity.  The values, expectations and respect of local custom associated with religious practices and structures; tribal, family and religious leaders; and women and children should be manifestly observed by U.S. forces in order to enhance the government's ability to receive the loyalty and support of the population.

Concluding remarks.

The preceding paragraphs have attempted to delineate what are considered to be principles about counter-insurgency warfare.  It is the author's contention the categories of strategic, operational, logistical and cultural considerations as well as the subcomponents

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[21] This point is acknowledged within the *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, although the manual was referring specifically to logistical issues, the point has a greater application.  The manual states: "Part of the problem with previously dysfunctional military cultures in many unstable countries is a pervasive climate of corruption and graft that can cripple attempts to develop effective support services.  Logisticians conducting such training should expect to stress repeatedly the long-term benefits of supply discipline and material accountability." *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, pp. 269-270.

outlined therein will always be relevant to the study of counter-insurgency warfare. To be sure, more analysis can and should be conducted about the nature of insurgencies in light of the assumption the U.S. will likely be involved in such warfare for the foreseeable future. For instance, there at least two important areas which this essay has not covered but are worthy of further of analysis pertaining to counter-insurgency; that of hybrid warfare and the transformation of a guerrilla war into a conventional war.

With respect to hybrid warfare, an insurgency can be combined with a conventional campaign as was evinced in Vietnam. The Viet Cong consisted of both conventional and guerrilla forces and often worked closely with the North Vietnamese Army (NVA). Throughout much of the war, the Viet Cong and NVA conducted simultaneous attacks against U.S. and ARVN forces. Accordingly, adopting a strictly counter-insurgency approach to this kind of warfare will likely prove to be fatally deficient. An analysis of the interplay (how one supports the other) between conventional and insurgent operations, particularly the nexus points between the two, is an area requiring further study.

Another dynamic about insurgencies is there ability to morph into a conventional campaign. The Chinese Revolution started as a guerrilla movement. The poorly led, low morale and highly corrupt Nationalist Army proved no match against Mao Zedong's highly trained and disciplined People's Liberation Army (PLA). As Nationalist units surrendered, the PLA acquired the heavy equipment which served as the materiel foundation for a well orchestrated conventional campaign. Essentially, guerrilla leaders and fighters became proficient in conventional battles at the operational level. Therefore, another fruitful area for the study of counter-insurgency warfare is the way in which insurgencies can develop into conventional

warfare and how counter-insurgency doctrine must be properly synchronized with conventional warfare doctrine in order to keep pace with the transformation.

The aforementioned points notwithstanding, understanding and mastering the principles discussed in this essay is essential for optimizing the conditions of success in the insurgency environment by the battlefield commander. The extent to which one principle or set of principles require(s) greater application is a matter of context; a recent study by RAND/National Defense Research Institute clearly supports this point.[22] Nevertheless, the purpose of this essay is to help frame and refine our understanding of insurgency warfare so we can develop and implement effective measures against it.

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[22] Rabasa, Angel; Lesley Anne Warner; Peter Chalk, Ivan Khilko, and Paraag Shukla; *Money in the Bank: Lessons Learned from Past Counterinsurgency (COIN) Operations*; Prepared for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, RAND Corporation, 2007, p. Summary xiii.